

# PREVENTION WEDNESDAY

SUN MON TUE THUR FRI SAT

City of Baltimore Health Department

## Reducing Infections in Schools & Child Care

What are the **top five** infectious illnesses that keep children home from school and child care?

**1. COLDS:** While adults average two to four colds a year, children typically have six to 10. Almost all colds are caused by viruses, and though very contagious do not require antibiotics.

**2. STOMACH FLU:** Gastroenteritis, commonly known as stomach flu, can lead to vomiting and diarrhea and can result in dehydration, especially in very young children.

**3. EAR INFECTION:** Ear infections occur most often in children under two, but are common among five and six year olds too.

**4. PINK EYE:** Conjunctivitis, an inflammation of the eye and eyelid, can be caused by allergies or infection. Bacterial infections are highly contagious and should be diagnosed and treated early.

**5. SORE THROAT:** Most sore throats are caused by viruses and about 15% are the result of streptococci – the bacteria that causes strep throat.

### When to wash?

- After using the restroom
- Before eating and handling food
- After coughing or sneezing
- When caring for infants or someone who is ill
- After playing with pets
- Before and after giving medication
- After playing in sandboxes
- After taking out the trash

### Prevention at your fingerTIPS:

TIPS to protect yourself and those in your care from infectious disease:

#### Tip 1 Teach proper hand washing technique early and make it fun

##### HERE'S HOW:

- Wet hands with warm water
- Apply soap and lather well
- Rub hands together vigorously
- Scrub for 20 seconds (try humming Happy Birthday twice)
- Rinse completely
- Dry thoroughly with clean towel
- Use towel to turn off faucet and open bathroom door

❖ If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based gel to clean hands

#### Tip 2 Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve, not your hand

#### Tip 3 Keep disposable, one-use tissues within reach

#### Tip 4 Routinely sanitize high traffic surfaces, especially toilet and diapering areas

#### Tip 5 Keep a child with fever, vomiting or diarrhea at home

#### Tip 6 Make sure all children have up-to-date immunizations

## Resources and References

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**“Cover Your Cough” “Germ Stopper” and “Healthy Habits” posters available online at:**

<http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/materials.htm>

**Handwashing Toolkit Available at School Network for Absenteeism Prevention**

<http://www.itsasnap.org/snap/admin.asp>

**“Top 5 Illnesses” from MayoClinic.com, Tools for Healthier Lives, Children’s Illnesses**

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/childrens-conditions/CC00059>

**Centers for Disease Control, Clean Hands Save Lives**

<http://www.cdc.gov/cleanhands>

**National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education**

<http://nrc.uchsc.edu>

**Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care, 2nd Edition, 2002**

<http://nrc.uchsc.edu>

**National Association for the Education of Young Children**

<http://www.naeyc.org>

**Hand Washing Brochure - Spanish**

[http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/handwashing\\_brochure\\_sp.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/handwashing_brochure_sp.pdf)